



McGregor W. Scott
United States Attorney
Eastern District of California

Sacramento
501 I. Street, Ste 10-100
Sacramento CA 95814
(916) 554-2700

NEWS RELEASE

Fresno
1130 O. Street, Rm 3654
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 498-7272

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 24, 2005

Contact: Kim Kelly, 559-498-7272
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/cae/home/>

PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS AND VIOLENT CRIMES IMPACT TEAM (VCIT) INITIATIVES LEAD TO THREE FEDERAL INDICTMENTS FOR FIREARMS POSSESSION

FRESNO—United States Attorney McGregor Scott; Special Agent in Charge Paul J. Vido of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF); District Attorney Elizabeth Egan, Fresno County; and Police Chief Jerry Dyer, Fresno Police Department jointly announced three federal prosecutions arising out of the United States Department of Justice Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) and Violent Crimes Impact Team (VCIT) initiatives. Yesterday FLORENCIO GOMEZ, age 24, of Fresno was arrested by Fresno Police Department in Fresno without incident on a warrant issued by a federal district court, and was one of three defendants indicted on June 16, 2003 by a federal grand jury in Fresno. GOMEZ was charged for being a felon in possession of a sawed-off shotgun on May 21, 2005; WILLIS MUCELROY, age 31, of Fresno, was charged for being a felon in possession of a loaded .40 caliber Sig Sauer handgun on June 3, 2005, and MATTHEW CASTILLO, age 27, of Fresno, was charged for being a drug user in possession of a firearm and possessing a .40 caliber glock and a .38 caliber derringer handgun in furtherance of drug trafficking. CASTILLO remains in custody on his pending charges. MUCELROY remains at large, and a warrant has been issued for his arrest. Anyone with information on his whereabouts should call crimestoppers at (559)498-STOP. A reward of up to \$1,000 is available information leading to MUCELROY's arrest. Callers can remain anonymous.

This case is the product of an investigation by the Fresno Police Department and the ATF.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Kimberly A. Kelly, who is prosecuting these cases, CASTILLO faces a maximum of 15 years imprisonment and a \$500,000 fine; GOMEZ faces a maximum of 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine; and MUCELROY faces a maximum of 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000.

United States Attorney Scott stated: "These indictments are a direct result of the cooperative effort by local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to reduce gang violence and firearms offenses. Through such initiatives as Project Safe Neighborhoods and the Violent Crime Impact Team, we will continue to do everything possible to reduce gun violence in the Central Valley."

“The aggressive enforcement and prosecution efforts of the Violent Crime Impact Team (VCIT) will result in many more arrests and federal prosecutions of Fresno area criminals who commit crimes with guns, or are found in possession of firearms,” stated Chief Dyer.

The charges in the indictments are only allegations, and each defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

###